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A Call to Ex-Servicemen of the Defence Services of India

From

General K.M.Cariappa (Retd.)

Remember, at all times, that you were brought up in one of the finest schools in the world, the Army, where you were taught the sense of discipline, team work, loyalty, sense of duty, sense of responsibility, value of time, of puntuality and sense of sacrifices of all kinds for the common good of your comrades and your countrymen. Although now no longer active servicemen, you have an inescapable duty to yourself and to the society you live in, to live upto the highest traditions of the services you had the honour to belong to.

It is the duty of the soldier to provide for the physical security of the civilian in times of war and in times of peace, it is the sacred duty of the civilian to provide for the domestic security of the Ex-Servicemen. So, our people must help you, as our Government is doing, for your welfare and rehabilitation; but remember in our country today you are only a small percentage of the millions of our people whose welfare and happiness have also got to be looked after by the Government. So do not demand too much of the attentions of the State and of all those philanthrophic people who have been giving some aid to the ex-servicemen, at the expense of the welfare of your fellow citizens.

I would ask you all ex-servicement to take on whatever job you may be offered, wherever it may beoffered and to accept grants of land wherever they may be, and not refuse them because they are not in your own home-town. The tendency to dictate your terms of acceptance of jobs and lands must stop. If you get a job please do not let yourself down and indeed your nearly three million fellow ex-servicemen too, by not living upto the traditions of the services. You must bear in mind at all times all the points I have mentioned earlier about discipline, sense of duty and so on.

In all the nation building work in our land, you can play a very important andhelpful part by offering your services to your local authorities entrusted with the duty of implementing policies and plans of our Government. Do not just sit back and demand your 'pound of flesh' on the grounds of yourbeing ex-servicemen, without giving even an ounce of your sweat and blood. As soldiers, you must reverse this order. Give gallons of your sweat and if need be your blood and demand only an ounce of 'flesh', if demanded at all. Organise amongst yourselves voluntary work in your villages in respect of sanitation, hygience, teaching children discipline and so on and teaching your people the sense of civic duties. You can get together and do co-operative farming and win the battle to produce more food as you had got together and did 'co-operative fighting' to defeat your enemy on thebattle field.

I assure you, every ex-serviceman and woman and indeed every civilian who has served loyally and efficiently for long years in the Defence Services, you will have my guidance wherever there are legitimate grievances and proved hardships, but do not expect me to get for you whatever you may ask for. I am no longer in office.

I am like you, an ex-sergiceman! I believe there are nearly three million ex-servicemen and women in our country. There are many ex-servicemen's associations and ex-servicemen's co-operative societies; but alas, the membership of these is only a tiny percentage of the total. I hope every single ex-service officer, JCO, NCO, and OR will be a member of the association in this own region. Can you not see what formidable strength you will have if everyone of you automatically becomes a member of his local association? Then ex-servicemens' associations willhave great strength to have the problems of their members to be looked into and their grievances redressed by local authorities, more speedily and satisfactorily than otherwise. So, I would appeal to everyone of you, who is already a member, to get everyone else who is not a member to become one immediately. This will be a great service not only to yourself and to your fellow ex-servicemen but also to the thousand of serving men of today who will one day be ex-servicemen too.

Having got your local ex-Servicemen's Association well established and strengthened, get your Association to become a Member of the Indian Ex-Services League in Delhi, which is today the only officially recognised All India Organisation of Ex-Servicemen. The President of India is its Patron-in-Chief. All Ex-services Association in India must become Members of this League immediately.

There is terrific strength in your unity; so ex-servicemen, throughout India, get together soon.